



National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

Grazeley Parochial Church of England Aided Primary School

Grazeley

Reading

RG7 1JY

Previous SIAMS grade: Good

Current inspection grade: Good

Diocese: Oxford

Local authority: Wokingham

Dates of inspection: 1 July 2016

Date of last inspection: 10 June 2011

School's unique reference number: 110015

Headteacher: Celia Thatcher

Inspector's name and number: The Revd Dr Jason Phillips 598

School context

This is a small rural school of 134 pupils. It is rapidly expanding supported by a recent significant building programme to increase capacity. Most pupils are white British and from advantageous economic backgrounds. The proportion of pupils with a special educational need is around the national average.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Grazeley Parochial as a Church of England school are good

- The Christian leadership of the headteacher and acting deputy ensures that effective self-evaluation results in positive outcomes to continually develop the Christian characteristics of this school.
- The Christian ethos and Christian values develop pupils spiritually, morally, socially and culturally (SMSC) resulting in their high self-esteem and an ability to grapple with new and puzzling ideas.
- The application of biblical texts to collective worship, school values and the curriculum develops pupils' biblical knowledge and helps them to apply biblical principles in a relevant way.
- Governors effectively develop staff as leaders for church schools enhanced by effective links with St. Michael's church, the Oxford Diocese and other church schools.

Areas to improve

- Embed the progression of skills document for Religious Education (RE) into an assessment framework that clearly informs planning, assessment and tracking procedures.
- Develop and articulate a clear Christian pedagogy based upon love, peace and hope that informs and shapes the workings and outcomes of the school at every level, including governance.
- Develop a diverse range of creative and meaningful opportunities for adults and children to encounter prayer so that prayer has a central importance to the life of the school.
- Utilise the arts to develop the external environment in order to deepen and make visible pupils' understanding of The Trinity and prayer.

The school, through its distinctive Christian character, is good at meeting the needs of all learners

Grazeley Parochial is a good and improving church school with many key strengths. This is because of its skilful Christian leaders who are committed to the school's continued development. The school is clear in its Christian approach which it expresses in terms of the Christian values of love, hope and peace. The school has carefully mapped these values to shared British values to extend their impact and application. However, this school is not yet outstanding because these Christian values do not inform a clear pedagogy that coherently informs the working of the school at all levels. This means that the school's vision is not as rigorous as it could be. An example, of this is pupils' behaviour. Although behaviour is generally good, pupils demonstrate only a limited sense that the school's Christian values influence their behaviour choices. The values do influence an approach to attendance that seeks to support families resulting in attendance around the national average. The Christian character of the school prospers pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development (SMSC) that results in positive conditions for learning. This is supported by the new, carefully thought out and effective spiritual policy. Examples of the impact include pupils' high self-esteem and their willingness to explore new ideas including those of faith. Due to the positive influence of the Christian character on conditions for learning, the attainment and progress of the vast majority of pupils is good in all subjects. Relationships at all levels of the school are good. Where incidents do occur, pupils and parents are confident and secure in feeling things will be resolved effectively. The anti-bullying procedures of the school reflect the Church of England's guidance of best practice in 'All God's Children', resulting in pupils that feel safe and happy. As relationships are positive, pupils also develop empathy and respect for diverse communities and faiths. Children of all faiths and none are welcomed into this school. RE and collective worship make a positive contribution to this church school developing pupils' spirituality, biblical knowledge and awareness of multicultural Christianity. This is extended further by links with the Karun Christian school in India. One child said of Grazeley Parochial school, 'I like it here because it is friendly and we hear bible stories and we try to love as Jesus loved.'

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good

Collective worship is a joyful, positive and valued aspect of the school. It is inclusive and results in a sense of community. Collective worship makes a significant contribution to the SMSC of pupils. This is because it promotes the school's Christian values and is underpinned carefully with biblical references. Further, it establishes careful links between biblical texts and pupils' lives. This makes biblical principles directly relevant to the children. It also extends their theological and religious vocabulary supporting their ability to grapple with puzzling and mysterious concepts. Collective worship is well planned and applies the 'God's Storyteller' approach to extend pupils' knowledge of the Bible and the person of Jesus. Planning is effective and utilises the local church, church members and clergy to develop the school's Anglican approach and collective worship provision. The planning enables celebration of key Christian festivals such as Pentecost. This helps children and adults appreciate the rhythm of the Christian year and the Anglican liturgical tradition. Pupils have opportunities to be actively involved in collective worship including planning and evaluation. As a result, pupils feel that collective worship is something that they can influence and benefit from. Consequently, most pupils have positive attitudes towards collective worship. Acts of worship develop some awareness of the Trinity. An example of this is the bringing together of symbols of the Trinity by each class as the school community gathers for collective worship. Pupils understanding of the Trinity, however, is shallow. The school provides some opportunity for prayer. However, the variety and depth of prayer opportunities both within and beyond collective worship are not as extensive as they might be. This narrowing of opportunity inhibits the impact of prayer upon children and adults and their understanding of its relevance to their lives. This is why collective worship is not yet outstanding. Governors monitor with the lead teacher ensuring collective worship is continually improving and meets statutory requirements.

### The effectiveness of the religious education is good

Standards attained in RE at this school are good. This is because the RE curriculum is well planned and motivates the children. RE is effective because teaching is generally good. The effectiveness of RE is not yet outstanding because the new progression of skills documents is not yet embedded and assessment systems are only emerging. This means that some pupils are not stretched as much as they could be and some lessons are not shaped to fully take account of prior learning. Nevertheless, the skills of RE are developed resulting in pupils that are knowledgeable of Christianity and other faith traditions through questioning, analysis and reflection. The use of biblical teaching deepens pupils' understanding of Christianity. RE contributes significantly to the SMSC of pupils enabling them to grapple with complex and puzzling ideas freely such as the nature of creation and Jewish, Muslim and Christian perceptions of the Creator. One parent said of RE and its impact on pupils' SMSC, 'the children come out enhanced because of RE and the spiritual level of the school makes them think more deeply.' Governors and the subject leader ensure RE has a high profile in school and extends the school's Christian values. Statutory requirements are met through the careful use of the Oxford Diocese scheme of work and the Pan-Berkshire local syllabus. Arising from these schemes are learning units that motivate pupils because they are actively engaged. Examples of this include interviewing a local rabbi and creatively exploring the Jewish rituals for Shabbat. The subject leader and governors utilise the SIAMS evaluation schedule to support them in their monitoring and evaluation. This means they are aware of the developmental needs of RE. They challenge and support staff in improving the subject still further.

The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the school as a church school is good. The Christian leadership and dedication of the headteacher and acting deputy is a real strength of this school. They ensure that the Christian characteristics of this church school continually develop through effective self-evaluation. As a consequence, the development points from the last inspection have been responded to appropriately resulting in significantly improved outcomes for pupils. However, leadership and management are not yet outstanding because the values, aims and visions of this school are not yet fully embedded. Further, the school doesn't have a fully worked-out Christian pedagogy based upon its values of love, hope and peace. As the Christian pedagogy is not clearly articulated, the influence of the values is not as deep as they might be on the workings of the school at all levels. This includes upon governance and its growth-mind-set approach. Governors are highly effective at developing leaders of church schools resulting in effective succession planning and the development of this church school. The school is skilled at utilising links with the diocese, St. Michael's Church and other church schools. This further develops leaders and their capacity to bring about positive outcomes for the pupils. Governors support and challenge leaders effectively. This ensures the Christian impact of the school results in standards and achievement in all subjects that are good. Governors ensure the high profile of RE and collective worship in school and that statutory requirements are met. Through RE, leaders enable pupils to develop an awareness of the multicultural nature of Christianity as well as multi-faith Britain. The governors and staff model the values of love, hope and peace that results in a caring environment where pupils and staff flourish. Further this results in parents that feel part of the family of the school. As a result, parents rightly speak well of the school and the impact of the school's Christian character upon the high self-esteem and success of their children.